

Our Tophouse Has Risen to the Occasion



Photograph from *San Antonio Light* article - January 24, 1968

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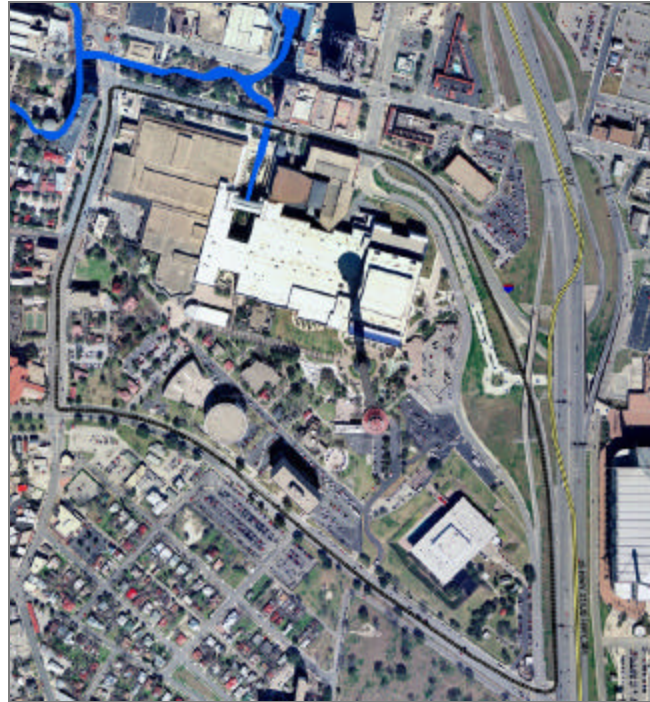
Map

No. 1 - Aerial View

Plan Purpose - A Catalyst for Action

The HemisFair Park area contains the land on which one of San Antonio's most important events of the twentieth century occurred. The HemisFair '68 International Exposition provided a unique opportunity for the San Antonio community to expose its cultural and community resources to an international audience.

The decade of planning and actions that preceded the event identified various plans for post-HemisFair uses and property ownership. However, for the thirty-five years since the fair, the site has been the subject of numerous development schemes, played host to myriad of incongruent public and private uses, yet has not had the benefit of a comprehensive master plan.



Aerial view of HemisFair Park site

City Council Directive

In October, 2003, at the request of Councilman Roger O. Flores, and with the support of the entire City Council, staff began to develop a Master Plan for the HemisFair site. This plan outlines recommendations and strategies for future park development, building uses, and linkages within the park and to surrounding areas and neighborhoods.

Boundaries

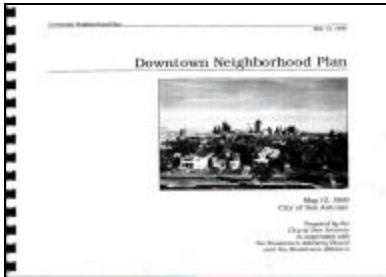
The HemisFair Park Area Master Plan addresses the land area that served as the primary site of the HemisFair '68 exposition. The planning area is bound by Market Street to the north, IH-37 to the east, Durango Boulevard to the south, and Alamo Street to the west. The HemisFair Park Area Master Plan is located in City Council District 1.

Downtown Neighborhood Plan Update

The Unified Development Code (Section 35-420) provides for updates to neighborhood and community plans every five years. The 2004 HemisFair Park Area Master Plan serves as an update to the Downtown Neighborhood Plan, which was adopted as a component to the City's Comprehensive Master Plan on May 13, 1999.

The purpose of the Downtown Neighborhood Plan is to identify proposed land uses, potential housing development areas, transportation systems, economic development initiatives, urban design guidelines as well as pedestrian and open space connections. In 1999, more than 800 stakeholders attended 13 public meetings in the development of the Plan, which serves as a guide for future growth and development. The Plan is to be consulted by City departments and agencies when considering policy development and capital projects. Recently, the Land Use Plan in the document served as a guide for the comprehensive rezoning of the Central Business District.

The Downtown Neighborhood Plan classifies the HemisFair Park Area as a Government/Educational land use and recommends the continuation of this area's use as a Special Events District. However, no further recommendations specific to the HemisFair Park Area were addressed in the Downtown Neighborhood Plan. The HemisFair Park Area Master Plan specifically supports the following goals in the Downtown Neighborhood Plan:



1. Improve and maintain the pedestrian environment
2. Enhance and create a broader system of open/public spaces throughout the entire downtown
3. Encourage the development of Durango Boulevard into a midrise, mixed-use transition zone and improve the pedestrian environment
4. Develop an information system, including kiosks and historical markings

Recent public investment to expand the Convention Center and future rehabilitation of the Tower of the Americas warrants updating the Downtown Neighborhood Plan with a specific plan to develop the HemisFair Park area as a regional community asset, by addressing the various physical and linkage components of the site and its surrounding environs.

Plan Adoption

The HemisFair Area Master Plan concept was approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on January 26, 2004 and the Historic and Design Review Commission on February 18, 2004. The HemisFair Park Area Master Plan is consistent with the 1978 Major Thoroughfare Plan (*as amended*), the 1997 Master Plan, the 1999 Parks and Recreation System Plan, and the 1999 Downtown Neighborhood Plan. The Plan supports the goals of the 1996 Downtown Strategic Plan.

The HemisFair Park Area Master Plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission in a Public Hearing on March 10, 2004 to ensure that the plan was inclusive, consistent with City policies, and an accurate reflection of community values. Upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, the plan was forwarded to the City of San Antonio City Council for adoption as an update to the Downtown Neighborhood Plan, a component of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan.

Plan Significance

A City Council adopted HemisFair Park Area Master Plan becomes a component of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan. The approved Plan serves as a guide when reviewing zoning and growth and development proposals. It is to be consulted by City departments and agencies when considering policy development and capital projects. There is no financial commitment required by the City of San Antonio once the Plan is approved.

Amendment Process

Once the Master Plan is adopted by City Council, any requested changes to the proposed land use would require a Plan Amendment. Similarly, if a Neighborhood/Community Plan has been adopted for any of the adjacent land areas for which the HemisFair Park Area Master Plan makes recommendations, a Plan Amendment would be required to address any future land use changes in the original Neighborhood/Community Plan. This Plan Amendment process may be required to fully develop the recommendations for adjacent land uses set forth in the HemisFair Park Area Master Plan. The Plan Amendment process and accompanying notification requirements are outlined in UDC Section 35-450.